

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
A Subcommittee of the Commission on Technology
Minutes
June 4, 2004

Members Present:

John Barrett
Ron Beguin*
Janet Cornell
David Davis
Daniel Edwards
Karl Heckart
John King
Carol Merfeld
Eloise Price *
Kyle Rimel
Will Tagart

Members Not Present:

Mohyeddin Abdulaziz
Joan Harphant
Cary Meister
Greg Obuch
Alan Turner

Others Present:

Lillith Avalon
William Earl
Maureen Haggerty
Sue Hall*, Clerk of Superior Court in
Apache County
Patricia Noland, Clerk of Superior
Court in Pima County

***via phone**

INTRODUCTIONS

The June 10, 2004 meeting of the Technical Advisory Council was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Karl Heckart, Chair.

Review and make recommendations on the Apache County Superior Court Project Investment Justification for an alternative EDMS

The group discussed the Judicial Project Investment Justification document submitted by Apache Superior Clerk of Court. They have asked for an exception to the electronic document management system standard, OnBase. Instead, they wish to implement the internally developed system used by Pima Superior Court Clerk.

Discussion revolved first around the successful implementation of the standard system, OnBase, in Gila, Mohave and Pinal. Ellie and Kyle stated that implementation was going well; it was noted that Pinal has been operating it for two years.

Karl summarized the issues that needed to be addressed. They included: deficiencies of the current standard, the support model, total costs, integration, security and archive standards.

Patricia Noland, whose staff developed the system, stated that the system meets all State of Arizona and court standards. Some members felt that the Pima system was technically sound because it was a system operating in production and thus must be so. Others felt that the system's technical environment, programming, documentation, etc. had not been examined and thus TAC could not make such a statement.

Members agreed that there is no deficiency in the current EDMS standard. The reasons for the requested exception do not include technical or functional deficiencies but are based on cost.

Support of the system is a factor. Ms. Noland says that Pima Clerk's office will support the product and assist Apache Clerk's office when needed. She said they had identified and agreed on all the points of an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) and would document and formalize that agreement if permitted to go forward. It was noted that there is a local support vendor (OSAM) but the standard EDMS product (OnBase) is updated and supported by Hyland, a national company.

Integration with other applications was discussed. There was no clear direction here because COT has not formally decided on the direction for a new case management system. They have, instead, encouraged selected projects to proceed and prove themselves. Thus, which products ultimately need to be integrated with is yet to be determined. In the meantime, however, the standard product would continue to be interfaced to AZTEC, and there are no plans to extend AZTEC integration to another product.

Apache Clerk's office will be doing dual data entry into AZTEC and the EDMS. They have evaluated this and are willing to proceed regardless. They also will be performing back-scanning of millions of documents.

In summary, TAC generally agreed that: 1) there was no technical deficiency in the current EDMS standard that would justify adopting an alternative; 2) that there was concern about support over the long-term; 3) that any integration efforts should await decisions on a general jurisdiction case management system; and 4) they acknowledge the cost issue but deem it a business and not technical issue.

JPIJ format: discussion

Carol Merfeld summarized the work of the JPIJ Ad Hoc Committee. The Committee shortened the Judicial Project Investment Justification Version 1.0. Basically, it removed detailed items and scoring regarding benefits and risks, and substituted a request for a free-form response. Members approved the new format. This new format will be reviewed by COT at its September meeting.

Electronic Signatures: ad hoc committee report and discussion of MEEDS as efilng.

Maureen summarized the findings of the ad hoc committee. Basically, most courts around the country are not using a PKI certificate for signatures. Most use an imaged or typed signature and file internally prepared electronic documents into an electronic filing system. In Arizona's Division 2, they are using a server signature to calculate a hash value for a document in order to detect document changes. The court's server, in essence, associates a PKI signature with each document.

Will noted that document signing and security comes down more to a process than a technology. EDMS systems must have strong security capable of tracking document history and changes.

Generally, the conclusion was that courts seem to be trying to use processes (involving passwords and IDs) and internal security for affixing signatures to documents and that we should not adopt a particular technology at this time. Rather, we must focus on sound systems with excellent security and well-documented processes and procedures.

Security Manual

This manual was distributed. None had reviewed it in sufficient detail to have a discussion. Many were awaiting reviews of other technical staff within their organizations. This will be on the next agenda.

Roundtable discussion: Projects, status and issues

Karl provided an update on several projects.

Kyle from Mohave Courts asked about disaster recovery. The courts are working on their plan and have identified communications as the weakest link. He wanted to know what could be done if the courts set up a special facility and needed access to their data but communication lines were down. Karl assured him that the AOC could deliver a server with their databases on it within the 5 days they indicated was the timeframe desired for recovery of basic business functions.

In response to a request for providing information from AZTEC to local justice agencies, Karl noted that some query capability already existed. The function, sTRAC, will be demonstrated at the next TAC meeting.

Following a "Call to the Public," the meeting adjourned.

Next year's probable meeting schedule (based on the usual second Friday of every even-numbered month) is: August 13 (Room 230), October 8 (Room 230), December 10 (Room 119A&B), February 11 (Room 230), April 8 (Room 230), and June 10 (Room 230)